LOVES METAMORPHOSIS.

A

Wittie and Courtly Pastorall,

WRITTEN BY

Mr. Iohn Lyllie.

First playd by the Children of Paules, and now by the Children of the Chappell.

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Loues Metamorphosis.

Ramis, Montanus, Siluestris.

I Cannot see, *Montanus*, why it is fain'd by the Poets, that Loue sat vpon the *Chaos* and created the world; since in the world there is so little loue.

Mon. Ramis, thou canst not see that which cannot with reason be imagined; for if the diuine vertues of Loue, had disperst themselues through the powers of the world, so forcibly as to make them take by his influence, the formes and qualities impreſt within them, no doubt they could not chuse, but sauour more of his Diuinitie.

Sil. I doe not thinke Loue hath any sparke of Diuinitie in him; since the end of his being is earthly. In the bloud is he begot by the fraile fires of the eye, & quencht by the frayler shadowes of thought. What reason haue we then to soothe his humor with such zeale, and solow his fading delights with such passion?

Ram. We haue bodies, *Siluestris*, and humane bodies; which in their [illegible] natures being much more wretched then beastes, [illegible] much more miserably then beasts pursue their owne ruines: And since it will aske longer labour and studie to subdue the powers of our bloud, to the rule of the soule, then to satisfie them with the fruition of

our loues, let vs bee constant in the worlds errours, and seeke our owne torments.

Mont. As good yeeld indeed submissiuely, and satisfie part of our affections; as bee stubburne without abilitie to resist, and enioy none of them: I am in worst plight, since I loue a Nymph that mockes loue.

Ram. And I one that hates loue.

Sil. I, one that thinkes her selfe aboue loue.

Ram. Let vs not dispute whose mistris is most bad, since they be all cruell; nor which of our fortunes be most froward, since they bee all desperate. I will hang my Skutchin on this tree in honour of *Ceres*, and write this verse on the tree in hope of my successe, *Penelopen ipsam perstes, modo tempore vinces*! *Penelope* will yeeld at last: continue and conquer.

Mont. I this: *Fructus abest facies cum bona tesse caret.* Faire faces lose their fauours, if they admit no louers.

Ram. But why studiest thou? What wilt thou write for thy Lady to read?

Sil. That which necessitie maketh me to indure, loue reuerence, wisdome wonder at, *Rivalem patienter habe.*

Mont. Come, let vs euerie one to our walkes, it may be we shall meete them walking. *Exeunt.*

ACTVS PRIMVS.

SCENA SECVNDA.

Nisa, Celia, Niobe, Fidelia, Erisicthon.

Nisa. It is time to hang vp our Garlands, this is our harueit holy day, wee must both sing and daunce in the honour of Ceres: of what colours or flowers is thine made of, *Niobe*?

Niob. Of Salamints, which in the morning are white, at noone, and in the Euening purple, for in my affec-

tions

tions shall there be no staiednesse but in vnstaiednes: but what is yours of, *Nisa*?

Nisa. Of Hollie, because it is most holy, which louely greene neither the Sunnes beames, nor the winds blasts can alter or diminish. But *Celia*, what Garland haue you?

Celia. Mine all of Cypres leaues, which are broadest and beautifullest, yet beareth the least fruit; for beautie maketh the brightest shew, being the slightest substance; and I am content to wither before I bee worne, and depriue my selfe of that which so many desire.

Niob. Come, let vs make an end, least *Ceres* come and find vs slacke in performing that which wee owe: But soft, some haue beene here this Morning before vs.

Nis. The amorous Foresters, or none, for in the woods they haue eaten so much wake-Robin, that they cannot sleepe for loue.

Celia. Alas poore soules, how ill loue sounds in their lips, who telling a long tale of hunting, thinke they haue bewray'd a sad passion of loue!

Niob. Giue them leaue to loue, since we haue libertie to chuse, for as great sport doe I take in coursing their tame hearts, as they doe paines in hunting their wilde Harts.

Celia. *Niobe*, your affection is but pinned to your tongue, which when you list you can vnloose? But let vs read what they haue written: *Penelopen ipsam perstes modo tempore vinces*. That is for you *Nisa*, whome nothing will mooue, yet hope makes him houer.

Nisa. A fond Hobbie to houer ouer an Eagle.

Niob. But Forresters thinke all Birds to be Buntings. What's the next? *Fructus abest facies cum bona teste caret*. *Celia*, the Forrester giues you good counsel, take your penniworth whiles the market serues.

Celia. I hope it will be masket day till my deathes day.

Nisa. Let me read to. *Rivalem patienter habe*. Her tou-

cheth you, *Niobe*, on the quicke, yet you see how patient he is in your constancie.

Niob. Inconstancie is a vice, which I will not swap for all the vertues; though I throwe one off with my whole hand, I can pull him againe with my little finger; let vs encourage them and write something; if they censure in fauourably, we know them fooles; if angerly, we will say they are froward.

Nisa. I will begin. *Cedat amor rebus, res age, tutus eris.*

Celia. Indeed better to tell stars then be idle, yet better idle then ill employed; Mine this. *Sat mihi si facies, sit bene nota mihi.*

Niob. You care for nothing but a Glasse, that is a flatterer.

Nisa. Then all men are Glasses.

Celia. Some Glasses are true.

Niob. No men are; but this is mine: *Victoria tecum habit.*

Nisa. Thou giuest hope.

Niob. He is worthy of it, that is patient.

Celia. Let vs sing, and so attend on *Ceres*; for this day, although into her heart neuer entred any motion of loue, yet vsually to the Temple of *Cupid*, shee offereth two white Doues, as entreating his fauour, and one Eagle, as commaunding his power. *Præcibusq; minas regaliter addet.*

Cantant & Saltant.

Erisicth. What noyse is this, what assembly, what Idolatrie! Is the modestie of virgins turnd to wantonnesse? The honour of *Ceres* accompted immortal? And *Erisicthon* ruler of this Forrest, esteemed of no force? Impudent giglots, that you are, to disturbe my game, or dare doe honour to any but *Erisicthon*. It is not your faire faces as smooth as Iuorie, nor your entysing eyes, though they drew yron like Adamants, nor your filed speeches, were they as forcible,

cible, as *Thessalides*, that shall make me any way flexible.

Niob. *Erisicthon*, thy sterne lookes ioynd with thy stout speeches; thy words as vnkembd as thy lockes, were able to affright men of bold courage, and to make vs silly girles frantick, that are full of feare; but knowe thou, *Erisicthon*, that were thy hands so vnstaied as thy tongue, and th'one as ready to execute mischiefe, as the other to threaten it; it should neither moue our hearts to aske pittie, or remooue our bodies from this place; wee are the handmaides of diuine *Ceres*, to faire *Ceres* is this holy tree dedicated, to *Ceres*, by whose fauour thy selfe liuest, that art worthy to perish.

Erisict. Are you addicted to *Ceres*, that in spight of *Erisicthon* you wil vse these sacrifices? No, immodest girles, you shal see that I haue neither regard of your sexe which men should tender, nor of your beautie which fooliſh loue would dote on, nor of your goddesse, which none but pieuish girles reuerence: I will destroy this tree in despite of all, and that you may see my hand execute, what my heart intendeth; and that no meane may appease my malice, my last word shall bee the beginning of the first blowe.

Celia. Out alas, what hath he done?

Niob. Our selues, I feare, must also minister matter to his furie.

Nisa. Let him alone: but see, the tree powreth out bloud, and I heare a voice.

Erisict. What voice? If in the tree there be any bodie, speake quickly, lest the next blow hit the tale out of thy mouth.

Fidel. Monster of men, hate of the heauens, and to the earth a burthen, what hath chast *Fidelia* committed? It is thy spite, *Cupid*, that hauing no power to wound my vnspotted mind, procureſt meanes to mangle my tender body, and by violece to gash those sides, that enclose a heart dedicate to vertue: or is it that sauage satire, that feeding his

sensuall appetite vpon lust, seeketh now to quench it with bloud, that being without hope to attaine my loue, hee may with cruelty end my life? Or doth *Ceres*, whose nymph I haue beene many yeares, in recompence of my inuiolable faith, reward me with vnspeakable torments? Diuine *Phœbus* that pursued *Daphne* till shee was turned to a Bay tree, ceased then to trouble her. I, the gods are pittifull; and *Cineras*, that with furie followed his daughter Mirrha, till shee was chaunged to a Mirre tree, left then to prosecute her; yea parents are naturall: *Phœbus* lamented the losse of his friend, *Cineras* of his child: but both gods, and men either forget or neglect the chaunge of *Fidelia*; nay follow her after her chaunge, to make her more miserable: so that there is nothing more hatefull then to be chast, whose bodies are followed in the world with lust, and prosecuted in the graues with tyrannie. Whose minds the freer they are from vice, their bodies are in the more daunger of mischiefe; so that they are not safe when they liue, because of mens loue; nor being chaunged, because of their hates; nor being dead, because of their defaming. What is that chastitie which so few women study to keep, and both gods and men seeke to violate? If onely a naked name, why are we so superstitious of a hollow sound? If a rare vertue, why are men so careless of such an exceeding rareness? Goe, Ladies, tell *Ceres* I am that *Fidelia*, that so long knit Garlands in her honour, and chased with a Satyre, by praier to the gods became turned to a tree, whose body now is growne ouer with a rough barke, and whose golden lockes are couered with greene leaues; yet whose mind nothing can alter, neither the feare of death, nor the torments. If *Ceres* seeke no reuenge, then let virginitie be not only the scorne of Sauage people, but the spoyle. But alas, I feele my last bloud to come, & therfore must end my last breath. Farewel Ladies, whose liues are subiect to many mischieues; for if you be faire, it is hard to be chast; if chast, impossible to be safe; if you be young,

you

you will quickly bend; if bend, you are suddenly broken. If you be foule, you shall seldome be flattered: if you be not flattered, you will euer bee sorrowfull. Beautie is a firme ficklenes, youth a feeble staiednesse, deformitie a continuall sadnesse.

Niob. Thou monster, canst thou heare this without griefe?

Erisict. Yea, and double your griefes with my blowes.

Nisa. Ah poore *Fidelia*, the expresse patterne of chastitie, and example of misfortune.

Celia. Ah cruel *Erisicthon*, that not onely defacest these holy trees, but murtherest also this chast nimph.

Erisict. Nimph or goddesse it skilleth not, for there is none that *Erisicthon* careth for, but *Erisicthon*: let *Ceres* the Lady of your haruest reuenge when shee will, nay when shee dares, and tell her this, that I am *Erisicthon*.

Niob. Thou art none of the gods.

Erisict. No, a contemner of the gods.

Nisa. And hopest thou to escape reuenge being but a man?

Erisict. Yea, I care not for reuenge beeing a man and *Erisicthon*.

Nisa. Come, let vs to *Ceres* and complaine of this vnacquainted and incredible villaine; if there bee power in her deitie, in her mind pittie, or vertue in virginitie, this monster cannot escape. *Exeunt.*

ACTVS SECVNDVS.

SCENA PRIMA.

Ceres, Niobe, Nisa, Cupid, Tirtena.

Ceres. Doth *Erisicthon* offer force to my Nymphs, and to my deitie disgrace? Haue I stuffed his barnes with fruit-

full graine, and doth hee stretch his hand against me with intolerable pride? So it is, *Ceres*, thine eyes may witnesse what thy Nymphes haue told, heere lyeth the tree hackt in peeces, and the bloud scarce cold of the faireſt virgine. If this bee thy crueltie, *Cupid*, I will no more hallow thy temple with sacred vowes: if thy cankred nature, *Erisicthon*, thou shalt find as great miserie, as thou shewest malice: I am resolued of thy punishment, and as speedie shall bee my reuenge, as thy rigour barbarous. *Tirtene*, on yonder hill where neuer grew graine nor leafe, where nothing is but barrennesse and coldnesse, feare and paleneſſe, lyeth famine, goe to her, and say that *Ceres* commaundeth her to gnaw on the bowels of *Erisicthon*, that his hunger may bee as vnquenchable as his furie.

Tirt. I obey, but how should I know her from others?

Cer. Thou canst not misse of her, if thou remember but her name; and that canst thou not forget, for that comming neere to the place, thou shalt find gnawing in thy stomacke. Shee lyeth gaping, and swalloweth nought but ayre; her face pale and so leane, that as easily thou maiest, through the verie skinne behold the bone, as in a glasse thy shadow; her haire long, blacke and shaggie; her eyes sunke so farre into her head, that shee looketh out of the nape of her necke; her lips white and rough; her teeth hollow and red with rustineſſe; her skin so thin, that thou maiest as liuely make an Anatomie of her body, as shee were cut vp with Chirurgios; her maw like a drie bladder, her heart swolne bigge with wind, and all her bowels like Snakes working in her body. This monster when thou shalt behold, tell her my mind, and returne with speed.

Tirt. I goe, fearing more the sight of famine, then the force.

Cer. Take thou these few eares of corne, but let not famine so much as smell to them; and let her goe aloofe from thee: Now shall *Erisicthon* see that *Ceres* is a great goddesse, as full of power as himselfe of pride; and as pi-

tilesse,

tilesse, as he presumptuous; how thinke you Ladies, is not this reuenge apt for so great iniurie?

Niob. Yes Madam: To let men see, they that contend with the gods, doe but confound themselues.

Cer. But let vs to the Temple of *Cupid*, and offer sacrifice; they that thinke it straunge for chastitie to humble it selfe to *Cupid*, knowe neither the power of loue, nor the nature of virginitie: th'one hauing absolute authoritie to commaund, the other difficultie to resist: and where such continuall warre is betweene loue and vertue, there must bee some parlies, and continuall perils: *Cupid* was neuer conquered, and therefore must bee flattered; Virginitie hath, and therefore must be humble.

Nisa. Into my heart, Madam, there did neuer enter any motion of loue.

Cer. Those that often say, they cannot loue, or will not loue, certainely they loue. Diost thou neuer see *Cupid*?

Nisa. No, but I haue heard him described at the full, and as I imagined, foolishly. First that he should bee a god blind and naked, with wings, with bowe, with arrowes, with fire-brands; swimming sometimes in the Sea, & playing sometimes on the shore; with many other deuices, which the Painters being the Poets Apes, haue taken as great paines to shaddow, as they to lie. Can I thinke that gods that commaund all things, would goe naked? What should he doe with wings, that knowes not where to flie? Or what with arrowes, that sees not howe to ayme? The heart is a narrow marke to hit, and rather requireth *Argus* eyes to take leuel, then a blind boy to shoote at randome: If he were fire, the Sea should quench those coles, or the flame turne him into cinders.

Cer. Well *Nisa*, thou shalt see him.

Nisa. I feare *Niobe* hath seene him.

Niob. Not I, Madam, yet must I confesse, that oftentimes I haue had sweete thoughts, sometimes hard conceites, betweene both a kind of yeelding; I know not what.

But certainely I thinke it is not loue: sigh I can, and find ease in melancholly: smile I doe, and take pleasure in imagination, I feele in my selfe a pleasing paine, a chill heate, a delicate bitternesse, how to terme it I know not; without doubt it may be loue, sure I am it is not hate.

Nisa. *Niobe* is tender hearted, whose thoughts are like water, yeelding to euerie thing; and nothing to bee seene.

Cer. Well, let vs to *Cupid*, and take heede that in your stubbernesse yo offend him not, whome by entreaties you ought to follow. *Dianas* Nymphes were as chast as *Ceres* virgines, as faire, as wise: how *Cupid* tormented them, I had rather you should heare then feele, but this is truth, they all yeelded to loue: looke not scornefully, my Nymphes, I say they are yeelded to loue. This is the temple, thou great god *Cupid*, whome the gods regard and men reuerence, let it bee lawfull for *Ceres* to offer her sacrifice.

Cup. Diuine *Ceres*, *Cupid* accepteth any thing, that commeth from *Ceres*; which feedeth my Sparrowes with ripe corne, my Pigeons with wholsome seedes; and honourest my Temple with chast virgines.

Cer. Then Loue, to thee I bring these white and spotlesse Doues, in token that my heart is as free from any thought of loue, as these from any blemish, and as cleare in virginitie, as these perfect in whitenesse. But that my Nymphes may know both thy power and thy lawes, and neither erre in ignorance nor pride, let me aske some questions to instruct them that they offend not thee, who he resist they cannot. In virgines what doth thou chiefest desire?

Cup. In those that are not in loue, reuerent thoughts of loue, in those that be, faithfull vowes.

Cer. What doest thou most hate in virgines?

Cup. Pride in the beautifull, bitter taunts in the wittie, incredulitie in all.

Cer.

Cer. What may I protect my virgines that they may neuer loue?

Cup. That they be neuer idle.

Cer. Why didst thou so cruellie torment all *Dianes* Nymphes with loue?

Cup. Because they thought it impossible to loue.

Cer. What is the substance of loue?

Cup. Constancie and secrecie.

Cer. What the signes?

Cup. Sighes and teares.

Cer. What the causes?

Cup. Wit and idlenesse.

Cer. What the meanes?

Cup. Oportunitie and Importunitie.

Cer. What the end?

Cup. Happinesse without end.

Cer. What requirest thou of men?

Cup. That onely shall be knowne to men.

Cer. What recompence for those that will not loue?

Cup. To be deceiued when they doe.

Cer. Well, *Cupid*, intreate my Nymphes with fauour, and though to loue it be no vice, yet sportfull virginitie is the onely vertue: let me keepe their thoughtes as chast, as their bodies, that *Ceres* may be happie, & they praised.

Cup. Why, *Ceres*, doe you thinke that lust followeth loue? *Ceres*, louers are chast: for what is loue, diuine loue, but the quintescens of chastitie, and affections binding by heauenly motions, that cannot bee vndone by earthly meanes, and must not be comptrolled by any man?

Cer. Wee will honour thee with continuall sacrifice, warme vs with mild affections, lest being too hotte, wee seeme immodest like women, or too cold insensible like stockes.

Cup. *Ceres*, let this serue for all: let not thy Nymphes be light nor obstinate, but as virgines should be, pitifull

and faithfull; so shall your flames warme, but not burne, delight and neuer discomfort.

Cer. How say you, my Nymphs, doth not *Cupid* speake like a good Counsel you I will not to loue, but coniure you I must that you be not disdainefull; let vs in, and see how *Erisichon* speedeth; famine flieth swiftly, and hath already seyzed on his stomacke.

Exeunt.

ACTVS TERTIVS.

SCENA PRIMA.

Ramis, Nisa, Montanus, Celia, Siluestris, Niobe.

Ram. Stay, cruell *Nisa*, thou knowest not from whome thou flieſt, and therefore flieſt; I come not to offer violence, but that which is inuiolable, my thoughts are as holy as thy vowes, and I as constant in loue as thou in crueltie: lust followeth not my loue as shadowes doe bodies, but truth is wouen into my loue, as veines into bodies; let me touch this tender arme, and say my loue is endlesse.

Nisa. And to no end.

Ram. It is without spot.

Nisa. And shall be without hope.

Ram. Dost thou disdaine Loue and his lawes?

Nisa. I doe not disdaine that which I thinke is not, yet laugh at those that honour it if it be.

Ram. Time shall bring to passe, that *Nisa* shall confesse there is loue.

Nisa. Then also will loue make me confesse, that *Nisa* was a foole.

Ram.

Ram. Is it folly to loue, which the gods accompt honourable, and men esteeme holy?

Nisa. The gods make any thing lawfull, because they be gods, and men honour shadowes for substance, because they are men.

Ram. Both gods and men agree that loue is a consuming of the heart, and restoring a bitter death in a sweete life.

Nisa. Gods doe know, and men should, that loue is a consuming of wit, and restoring of folly, a staring blindnesse, and a blind gazing.

Ram. Wouldst thou allot me death?

Nisa. No, but discretion.

Ram. Yeeld some hope.

Nisa. Hope to dispaire.

Ram. Not so long as *Nisa* is a woman.

Nisa. Therein, *Ramis*, you shew your selfe a man.

Ram. Why?

Nisa. In flattering your selfe, that all women wil yeeld.

Ram. All may.

Nisa. Thou shalt sweare that we cannot.

Ram. I will follow thee, and practise by denials to bee patient, or by disdaining die, and so be happie.

Exeunt.

Mont. Though thou hast ouer-taken me in loue, yet haue I ouer-taken thee in running: faire *Celia*, yeelde to loue, to sweete loue.

Celia. Montanus, thou art mad, that hauing no breath almost in running so fast, thou wilt yet spend more in speaking so foolishly: yeeld to loue I cannot, or if I doe, to thy loue I will not.

Mont. The fairest Wolfe chuseth the foulest, if he bee faithfullest, and he that indureth most griefe, not hee that hath most beautie.

Celia. If my thoughts were woluish, thy hopes might be as thy comparison is, beastly.

Mon. I would thy words were, as thy lookes are, louely.

Celia. I would thy lookes were, as thy affection is, blind.

Mont. Faire faces should haue smoothe hearts.

Celia. Fresh flowres haue crooked rootes.

Mont. Womens beauties will waine, and then no art can make them faire?

Celia. Mens follies will euer waxe, and then what reason can make them wise?

Mont. To be amiable and not to loue, is like a painted Lady, to haue colours, and no life.

Celia. To bee amorous, and not louely, is like a pleasant foole full of words, and no deserts.

Mont. What call you deserts, what louely?

Celia. No louelier thing then wit, no greater desert then patience.

Mont. Haue not I an excellent wit?

Celia. If thou thinke so thy selfe, thou art an excellent foole.

Mont. Foole? No, *Celia*, thou shalt find me as wise, as I doe thee proud, and as little to disgest thy taunts, as thou to brooke my loue.

Celia. I thought, *Montanus*, that you could not deserue, when I told you what it was, Patience.

Mont. Sweete *Celia*, I will be patient and forget this.

Celia. Then want you wit, that you can be content to be patient.

Mont. A hard choyse, if I take all well, to be a foole, if find fault, then to want patience.

Celia. The fortune of loue, and the vertue is neither to haue successe, nor meane. Farewel.

Mont. Farewell, nay I will follow, and I know not how it commeth to passe; disdaine increaseth desire, and the farther possibilitie standeth, the neerer approacheth hope. I follow.

Sil. Polypus, Niobe, is euer of the colour of the stone it sticketh to, and thou euer of his humor thou talkest with.

Niob. Find you fault that I loue?

Sil. So many.

Niob. Would you haue me like none?

Sil. Yes one.

Niob. Who shall make choyse but my selfe?

Sil. My selfe.

Niob. For another to put thoughts into my head, were to pull the braynes out of my head; take not measure of my affections, but weigh your owne: the Oake findeth no fault with the dewe, because it also falleth on the bramble. Beleeue me, *Siluestrus*, the onely way to be mad, is to bee constant. Poets make their wreathes of Lawrell, Ladies of sundrie flowers.

Sil. Sweete *Niobe*, a ryuer running into diuers brookes becommeth shallow, and a mind diuided into sundrie affections, in the end will haue none: what ioy can I take in the fortune of my loue, when I shall know many to haue the like fauours? Turtles flocke by couples, and breede both ioy and young ones.

Niob. But Bees in swarmes, and bring forth waxe and honie.

Sil. Why doe you couet many, that may find sweetnesse in one?

Niob. Why had *Argus* an hundred eyes, and might haue seene with one?

Sil. Because whilest he slept with some, he might wake with other some.

Niob. And I loue many, because being deceiued by the inconstancie of diuers, I might yet haue one.

Sil. That was but a deuice of *Iuno*, that knewe *Iupiters* loue.

Nio. And this a rule of *Venus*, that knew mens lightnes.

Sil. The whole heauen hath but one Sunne.

Niob. But starres infinite.

Sil. The Rainebow is euer in one compasse.

Niob. But of sundrie colours.

Sil. A woman hath but one heart.

Niob. But a thousand thoughts.

Sil. My Lute, though it haue many strings, maketh a sweete consent, and a Ladies heart, though it harbour many fancies, should embrace but one loue.

Niob. The strings of my heart are tuned in a contrarie keye to your Lute, and make as sweete harmonie in discords, as yours in concord.

Sil. Why, what strings are in Ladies hearts? Not the base.

Niob. There is no base string in a womans heart.

Sil. The meane?

Niob. There was neuer meane in womans heart.

Sil. The treble?

Niob. Yea, the treble double and treble, and so are all my heart strings. Farewell.

Sil. Sweete *Niobe*, let vs sing, that I may die with the Swanne.

Niob. It will make you sigh the more, and liue with the Salamich.

Sil. Are thy tunes fire?

Niob. Are yours death?

Sil. No, but when I haue heard thy voice, I am content to die.

Niob. I will sing to content thee.

Cantant.

Sil. Inconstant *Niobe*! vnhappie *Siluestris*! yet had I rather shee should rather loue all then none: for nowe though I haue no certaintie, yet doe I find a kinde of sweetnesse.

Ram. Cruell *Nisa*, borne to slaughter men!

Mont.

Mont. Coy *Celia*, bred vp in skoffes!

Sil. Wauering, yet wittie *Niobe*, but are wee all mee?

Ram. Yea, and miet withall, if your fortunes be answerable to mine, for I find my Mistris immoueable, and the hope I haue is to despaire.

Mont. Mine in pride intolerable, who biddeth me looke for no other comfort then contempt.

Sil. Mine is best of all, and worst, this is my hope, that either shee will haue many or none.

Ram. I feare our fortunes cannot thriue, for *Erisicthon* hath felled downe the holy tree of *Ceres*, which will encrease in her choler, and in her Nymphes crueltie: let vs see whether our Garlands bee there which we hanged on that tree, and let vs hang our selues vpon another.

Sil. A remedie for loue irremoueable, but I will first see whether all those that loue *Niobe*, do like: in the meane season I will content my selfe with my share.

Mont. Here is the tree. O mischiefe scarce to be beleeued, impossible to be pardoned!

Ram. Pardoned it is not, for *Erisicthon* perisheth with famine, and is able to starue those that looke on him. Here hang our Garlands, something is written, read mine.

Sil. Cedit amor rebus, res age, tutus eris.

Mont. And mine.

Sil. Sat mihi si facies, sit bene nota mihi.

Now for my selfe,

Victoria tecum stabit scilicet.

Mont. You see their posies is as their hearts; and their hearts as their speeches, cruell, proud and wauering: let vs all to the Temple of *Cupid*, and intreate his fauour, if not to obtaine their loues, yet to reuenge their hates, *Cupid* is a kinde god, who knowing our vnspotted thoughts, will punish them, or release vs. Wee will studie what reuenge to haue, that our paines proceeding of our owne minds, their plagues may also proceed from theirs. Are you all agreed?

Sil. I consent; but what if *Cupid* denie helpe?
Mont. Then he is no god.
Sil. But if he yeeld, what shall we aske?
Ram. Reuenge.
Mon. Then let vs prepare our selues for *Cupids* sacrifice.

Exeunt.

ACTVS TERTIVS.

SCENA SECVNDA.

Erisicthon, Protea, Marchant.

Erisict. Come, *Protea*, deare daughter, that name must thou buy too deare, necessitie causeth thee to be sold, nature must frame thee to be contented. Thou seest in how short a space I haue turned all my goods into my guts, where I feele a continuall fire, which nothing can quench, my famine increaseth by eating, resembling the Sea which receiueth all things, and cannot bee filled: life is sweete, hunger sharpe, betweene them the contention must bee short, vnlesse thou, *Protea*, prolong it. I haue acknowledged my offence against *Ceres*, make amends, I cannot, for the gods holding the ballance in their hands, what recompence can equally weigh with their punishments? Or what is hee that hauing but one ill thought of *Ceres*, that can race it with a thousand dutifull actions? such is the difference, that none can find defence: this is the ods, we miserable, and men, they immortall, and gods.

Prot. Deare father, I will obey both to sale and slaughter, accompting it the onely happinesse of my life, should I liue an hundred yeares, to prolong yours but one myute: I yeeld father, chop and chaunge me, I am readie, but first let mee make my prayers to *Neptune*, and withdraw

draw your selfe till I haue done, long it shall not bee, now it must be.

Erisict. Stay, sweete *Protea*, and that great god heare thy prayer, though *Ceres* stop her eares to mine.

Prot. Sacred *Neptune*, whose godhead conquered my maiden-head, bee as ready to heare my passions, as I was to beleeue thine, and performe that now I intreate, which thou didst promise when thy selfe didst loue. Let not me bee a pray to this *Marchaunt*, who knowes no other god then Gold, vnlesse it bee falsely swearing by a god to get gold; let me, as often as I be bought for money, or pawnd for meate, be turned into a Bird, Hare, or Lambe, or any shape, wherin I may be safe, so shall I preserue mine owne honour, my fathers life, and neuer repent me of thy loue, and now bestirre thee, for of all men, I hate that *Marchant*, who, if he find my beautie worth one pennie, will put it to vse to gaine ten, hauing no Religion in his mind, nor word in his mouth but money. *Neptune*, heare now or neuer. Father, I haue done.

Erisict. In good time, *Protea*, thou hast done, for loe, the *Marchant* keepeth not onely day, but hower.

Prot. If I had not beene here, had I beene forfeited?

Erisict. No; *Protea*, but thy father famished. Here, Gentleman, I am ready with my daughter.

Prot. Gentleman?

Mar. Yea, Gentleman, faire maide, my conditions make me no lesse.

Prot. Your conditions in deed brought in your obligations, your obligations, your Vsurie, your Vsurie, your Gentrie.

Mar. Why, doe you iudge no *Marchants* Gentlemen?

Prot. Yes, many, and some no men.

Mar. You shall be well intreated at my hands.

Prot. It may. Commmaunded I will not be.

Mar. If you be mine by bargaine, you shall.

Prot. Father, hath this *Marchant* also bought my mind?

Erisict. He cannot buy that, which cannot be sold.

Mar. Here is the money.

Erisict. Here the maide: farewell, my sweete daughter, I commit thee to the gods, and this mans curtesie, who I hope will deale no worse with thee, then hee would haue the gods with him. I must bee gone, lest I doe starue as I stand.

Exit.

Prot. Farewell, deare Father, I will not cease continually to pray to *Ceres*, for thy recouerie.

Mar. You are now mine, *Protea.*

Prot. And mine owne.

Mar. In will, not power.

Prot. In power if I will.

Mar. I perceiue, Nettles gently touched, sting, but roughly handled, make no smart.

Prot. Yet roughly handled, Nettles are Nettles, and a Waspe is a Waspe, though thee lose her sting.

Mar. But then they doe no harme.

Prot. Nor good.

Mar. Come with me, and you shall see, that Marchaunts know their good, as well as Gentlemen.

Prot. Sure I am, they haue Gentlemens goods.

Exeunt.

ACTVS

ACTVS QVARTVS.

SCENA PRIMA.

Ramis, Montanus, Siluestris, Cupid.

Ram. This is the Temple of our great god, let vs offer our sacrifice.

Mont. I am readie.

Sil. And I. *Cupid*, thou god of loue, whose arrowes haue pierced our hearts, giue eare to our plaints.

Cup. If you come to *Cupid*, speake boldly, so must louers, speake faithfully, so must speeders.

Ram. These euer burning Lampes, are signes of my neuer to be quenched flames; this bleeding heart, in which yet stickes the head of the golden shaft, is the liuely picture of inward torments: mine eyes shall bedewe thine Altars with teares, and my sighes couer thy Temple with a darke smoake, pittie poore *Ramis*.

Mont. With this distaffe haue I spun, that my exercises may bee as womanish as my affections, and so did *Hercules*: and with this halter will I hang my selfe, if my fortunes answere not my deserts, and so did *Iphis*. To thee, diuine *Cupid*, I present not a bleeding, but a bloudlesse heart, dried onely with sorrow, and worne with faithfull seruice.

This picture I offer, carued with no other instrument then Loue; pittie poore *Montanus*.

Sil. This fanne of Swans and Turtles feathers, is token of my truth and iealousie: iealousie, without which loue is dotage, and with which loue is madnesse, without the which loue is lust, and with which loue is folly. This heart, neither bleeding nor bloudlesse, but twolne with

sighes, I offer to thy godhead, protesting, that all my thoughts are as my words without lust; and all my loue, as my fortune without sweetnesse. This Garland of flowers, which hath all colours of the Rainebowe, witnesseth that my heart hath all torments of the world: pittie poore *Silnestris*.

Cup. I accept your offers not without cause, and wonder at your loues, not without pleasure: but bee your thoughts as true as your words?

Ram. Thou *Cupid*, that giuest the wound, knowest the heart, for as impossible it is to conceale our affections, as to resist thy force.

Cup. I know, that where mine arrowe lighteth, there breedeth loue, but shooting euerie minute a thousand shafts, I know not on whose heart they light, though they fall on no place but hearts. What are your mistresses?

Ram. *Ceres* maidens: mine most cruell, which shee calleth constancie.

Mont. Mine most faire, but most proud.

Sil. Mine most wittie, but most wauering.

Cup. Is the one cruell, th'other coye, the third inconstant?

Ram. Too cruell.

Mont. Too coye.

Sil. Too fickle.

Cup. What do they thinke of *Cupid*?

Ram. One saith hee hath no eyes, because he hits hee knowes not whome.

Mont. Th'other, that he hath no eares, to heare those that call.

Sil. The third, that he hath no nose, for sauours are not found of louers.

Ram. All, that hee hath no taste, because sweete and sower is all one.

Mont. All, that hee hath no sence, because paines are pleasures, and pleasures paines.

Sil.

Sil. All, that he is a fooliſh god, working without reaſon, and ſuffering the repulſe without regard.

Cup. Dare they blaſpheme my god-head, which *Ioue* doth worſhip, *Neptune* reuerence, and all the gods tremble at? To make them loue, were a reuenge too gentle for *Cupid*: to make you hate, a recompence too ſmal for louers. But of that anon: what haue you vſed in loue?

Ram. All things that may procure loue, giftes, words, othes, ſighs, and ſwounings.

Cup. What ſaid they of gifts?

Mont. That affection could not bee bought with gold.

Cup. What of words?

Ram. That they were golden blaſtes, out of Leaden bellowes.

Cup. What of othes?

Sil. That *Iupiter* neuer ſware true to *Iuno*.

Cup. What of ſighes?

Sil. That deceipt kept a forge in the hearts of fooles.

Cup. What of ſwounings?

Mont. Nothing, but that they wiſhed them deathes.

Cup. What reaſons gaue they, not to loue?

Sil. Womens reaſons, they would not, becauſe they would not.

Cup. Well, then ſhall you ſee *Cupid* requite their reaſons with his rigour. What puniſhment doe you deſire, that *Cupid* will denie?

Ram. Mine being ſo hard as ſtone, would I haue turned to ſtone, that being to louers pittileſſe, ſhee may to all the world be ſenceleſſe.

Mont. Mine being ſo faire and ſo proud, would I haue turned into ſome flower, that ſhee may know beautie is as fading as graſſe, which being freſh in the morning, is withered before night.

Sil. Mine diuine, *Cupid*, whoſe affection nothing can make ſtaied, let her be turned to that Bird, that liueth only

by ayre, and dieth if shee touch the earth, because it is constant. The bird of Paradise, *Cupid*, that drawing in her bowels nothing but ayre, shee may know her heart fed on nothing but ficklenesse.

Cup. Your reuenges are reasonable, and shall bee graunted. Thou *Nisa*, whose heart no teares could pearce, shalt with continuall waues be wasted: in stead of thy faire haire, shalt thou haue greene mosse, thy face of flint, because thy heart is of marble, thine eares shall bee holes for fishes, whose eares were more deafe then fishes. Thou *Celia*, whome beautie made proud, shalt haue the fruite of beautie, that is, to fade whiles it is flourishing, and to blast before it is blowne. Thy face, as faire as the Damaske rose, shall perish like the Damaske rose, the canker shall eate thee in the bud, and euerie little wind blow thee from the stalke, and then shall men in the morning weare thee in their Hats, and at night cast thee at their heeles. Thou *Niobe*, whome nothing can please (but that which most displeaseth *Cupid*, inconstancie) shalt only breathe and sucke ayre for foode, and weare feathers for silke, beeing more wauering then ayre, and lighter then feathers. This will *Cupid* doe. Therefore, when next you shall behold your Ladies, doe but send a faithfull sigh to *Cupid*, and there shall arise a thicke mist which *Proserpine* shall send, and in the moment you shall be reuenged, and they chaunged, *Cupid* proue himselfe a great god, and they peeuish girles.

Ram. With what sacrifice shall wee shewe our selues thankfull, or how may we requite this benefit?

Cup. You shal yerely at my Temple offer true hearts, and howerly bestow all your wits in louing deuices, thinke all the time lost, that is not spent in loue, let your othes be without number, but not without truth, your words full of alluring sweetnesse, but not of broad flatterie, your attires neate, but not womanish, your giftes of more price for the fine deuice, then the great valewe, and yet of

such

such valew, that the deuice seeme not beggerly, nor your selues blockish, be secrete that worketh myracles, bee constant that bringeth secrecie; this is all *Cupid* doth commaund. Away.

Ram. And to this we all willingly consent.

Nowe what resteth, but reuenge on them, that haue practised malice on vs, let mine be any thing, seeing shee will not be onely mine.

Mont. Let vs not now stand wishing, but presently seeke them out, vsing as great speed in following reuenge, as we did in pursuing our loue: certainely wee shall find them about *Ceres* tree, singing or sacrifizing.

Sil. But shall we not goe visit *Erisichthon*?

Mont. Not I, least hee eate vs, that deuoureth all things; his lookes are of force to famish: let vs in, and let all Ladies beware to offend those in spight, that loue them in honour, for when the Crow shall set his foote in their eye, and the blacke Oxe tread on their foote, they shall finde their misfortunes to be equall with their deformities, and men both to loath, and laugh at them.

Exeunt.

E ACTVS.

ACTVS QVARTVS.

SCENA PRIMA.

Erisicthon, Protea, Petulius, Syren.

Erisict. Come, *Protea*, tell me, how didst thou escape from the *Marchant*?

Prot. *Neptune*, that great god, when I was ready to goe with the *Marchaunt* into the ship, turned me to a Fisherman on the shore, with an Angle in my hand, and on my shoulder a net; the *Marchaunt* missing me, and yet finding me, asked me who I was, and whether I saw not a faire maiden? I answered no? Hee marueiling and raging, was forced either to lose his passage, or seeke for mee among the Pebbles? To make short, a good wind caused him to goe I know not whither, and me (thanks be to *Neptune*) to returne home.

Erisict. Thou art happie, *Protea*, though thy Father bee miserable: and *Neptune* gracious, though *Ceres* cruell: thy escape from the *Marchaunt*, breedeth in me life, ioy, and fulnesse.

Prot. My father cannot be miserable, if *Protea* be happie, for by selling me euerie day, hee shall neuer want meate, nor I shiftes to escape. And now, Father, giue me leaue to enioy my *Petulius*, that on this vnfortunate shore still seekes me sorrowing.

Erisict. Seeke him, deare *Protea*; find and enioy him; and liue euer hereafter to thine owne comforts, that hast hitherto beene the preseruer of mine.

Exit.

Prot. Aye me, behold, a *Syren* haunts this shore, the gods forbid shee should entangle my *Petulius*.

Syren.

Syr. Accursed men, whose loues haue no other meane then extremities, nor hates end but mischiefe.

Prot. Vnnaturall monster, no maide that accuseth men, whose loues are built on truth, and whose hearts are remoued by curtesie: I will heare the depth of her malice.

Syr. Of all creatures most vnkind, most cunning, by whose subtilties I am halfe fish, halfe flesh, themselues being neither fish nor flesh, in loue luke warme, in cruelty red hot, if they praise, they flatter; if flatter, deceiue; if deceiue, destroy.

Prot. Shee rayles at men, but seekes to intangle them, this slight is prepared for my sweete *Petulius*, I will withdraw my selfe close, for *Petulius* followeth, hee will without doubt be enamored of her, enchaunted hee shall not be, my charmes shall counteruaile hers, it is he hath saued my Fathers life with money, and must prolong mine with loue.

Pet. I maruaile, *Protea* is so farre before me, if shee runne, ile flie: sweete *Protea*, where art thou? it is *Petulius* calleth *Protea*.

Syr. Here commeth a braue youth. Now *Syren*, leaue out nothing that may allure, thy golden lockes, thy entising lookes, thy tuned voice, thy subtile speeche, thy faire promises, which neuer missed the heart of any but *Vlisses*.

Sing with a Glasse in her hand and a Combe.

Pet. What diuine goddesse is this? What sweete harmonie? My heart is rauished with such tickling thoughts, and mine eyes stayed with such a bewitching beautie, that I can neither find the meanes to remoue my affection, nor to turne aside my lookes. *Sing againe Syren.* I yeeld to death, but with such delight, that I would not wish to liue, vnlesse it were to heare thy sweete layes.

Syr. Liue still so thou loue me: why standest thou amazed at the word Loue?

Prot. It is high time to preuent this mischiefe: Nowe *Neptune*, stand to thy promise, and let me take suddenly the shape of an olde man; so shall I marre what shee makes.

Pet. Not yet come to my selfe, or if I bee, I dare not credit mine eares. Loue thee diuine goddesse? Vouchsafe I may honour thee, and liue by the imagination I haue of thy words and worthinesse.

Syr. I am a goddesse, but a Ladie and a virgine, whose loue if thou embrace, thou shalt liue no lesse happie, then the gods in heauen.

Prot. Beleeue not this Inchauntresse (sweete youth) who retaineth the face of a Virgine, but the heart of a Fiend, whose sweet tongue sheadeth more drops of bloud, then it vttereth sillables.

Pet. Out dottrell, whose dimme eyes cannot discerne beautie, nor doting age iudge of loue.

Prot. If thou listen to her words, thou shalt not liue to repent: for her malice is as suddaine, as her ioyes are sweete.

Pet. Thy siluer haires are not so precious, as her golden lockes, nor thy crooked age of that estimation, as her flowring youth.

Syr. That old man measureth the hot assault of loue, with the cold skirmishes of age.

Prot. That young cruell resembleth old Apes, who kill by culling; from the top of this Rocke whereon shee sitteth,

sitteth, will shee throw thee headlong into the Sea, whose song is the instrument of her witchcraft, neuer smiling but when shee meaneth to smite, and vnder the flatterie of loue, practiseth the sheading of bloud.

Pet. What art thou, which so blaspheme'st this diuine creature?

Prot. I am the Ghost of *Vlisses*, who continually houer about these places, where this *Syren* haunteth, to saue those which otherwise should be spoyled: stop thine eares, as I did mine, and succour the faire, but by thy folly, the most infortunate *Protea*.

Pet. *Protea*? What dost thou heare, *Petulius*? Where is *Protea*?

Prot. In this thicket, ready to hang her selfe, because thou carest not for her, that did sweare to follow: curse this hag; who onely hath the voice and face of a Virgine, the rest all fish and feathers, and filth; follow me, and strongly stoppe thine eares, lest the second encounter make the wound incurable.

Pet. Is this a *Syren*, and thou *Vlisses*? cursed be that hellish carkas, and blessed be thy heauenly spirit.

Syr. I shrinke my head for shame. O *Vlisses*, is it not enough for thee to escape, but also to teach others? Sing and die, nay die, and neuer sing more.

Prot. Followe me at this doore, and out at the other.

Pet. How am I deliuered! the old man is vanished, and here for him stands *Protea*.

Prot. Here standeth *Protea*, that hath saued thy life, thou must also prolong hers: but let vs into the woods, and there I will tell thee howe I came to *Vlisses*, and the summe of all my fortunes, which happily will breed in thee both loue and wonder.

Pet. I will, and onely loue *Protea*, and neuer cease to wonder at *Protea*.

Exeunt.

ACTVS QVINTVS.

SCENA PRIMA.

Ceres, Cupid, Tirtena.

Cer. *Cupid*, thou hast transformed my Nymphes and incensed me, them to shapes vnreasonable, me to anger immortall, for at one time I am both robd of mine honour and my Nymphes.

Cup. *Ceres*, thy Nymphes were stubborne, and thy selfe speaking so imperiously to *Cupid*, somewhat stately. If you aske the cause in choller, *Sic volo, sic iubeo*: if in curtesie, *Quæ venit ex merito pœna dolenda venit*. They were disdainefull, and haue their deserts; thou *Ceres*, doest but gouerne the guts of men, I the hearts: thou seekest to starue *Erisicthon* with thy ministred famine, whome his daughter shall preserue by my vertue loue.

Cer. Thou art but a god *Cupid*.

Cup. No *Ceres*, but such a god as maketh thunder fall out of *Ioues* hand, by throwing thoughts into his heart, and to bee more terrified with the sparkling of a Ladies eye, then men with the flashes of his lightning: such a god that hath kindled more fire in *Neptunes* bosome, then the whole Sea which he is king of can quench: such power haue I, that *Plutoes* neuer dying fire, doth but scorch in respect of my flames. *Diana* hath felt some motions of loue, *Vesta* doth, *Ceres* shall.

Cer. Art thou so cruell?

Cup. To those that resist, a Lyon, to those that submit, a Lambe.

Cer. Canst thou make such difference in affection, and yet shall it all be loue?

Cup.

Cup. Yea, as much as betweene sicknesse and health, though in both bee life: those that yeeld and honour *Cupid*, shall possesse sweete thoughts, and enioy pleasing wishes: the other shall bee tormented with vaine imaginations and impossible hopes.

Cer. How may my Nymphes be restored?

Cu. If thou restore *Erisicthon*, they embrace their loues, and all offer sacrifice to me.

Cer. *Erisicthon* did in contempt hewe downe my sacred tree.

Cup. Thy Nymphes did in disdaine, scorne my constant loue.

Cer. Hee slew most cruelly my chast *Fidelia*, whose bloud lieth yet on the ground.

Cup. But *Diana* hath chaunged her bloud to freshe flowers, which are to be seene on the ground.

Cer. What honour shal he doe to *Ceres*? What amends can he make to *Fidelia*?

Cup. All *Ceres* groue shall he decke with Garlands, and accompt euerie tree holy; a stately monument shall hee erect, in remembraunce of *Fidelia*, and offer yearely sacrifice.

Cer. What sacrifice shall I and my Nymphes offer thee? For I will doe any thing to restore my Nymphes, and honour thee.

Cup. You shall present in honour of my mother *Venus*, Grapes and Wheate, for *Sine Cerere & Baccho friget Venus*. You shall suffer your Nymphes to play, sometimes to be idle, in the fauour of *Cupid*, for *Otia si tollas, periere Cupidinis arcus*. So much for *Ceres*. Thy Nymphes shall make no vowes to continue Virgins, nor vse words to disgrace loue, nor flie from oportunities that kindle affections: if they be chast, let them not bee cruell; if faire, not proud; if louing not inconstant. Cruelty is for Tygers, pride for Peacockes, inconstancie for fooles.

Cer. *Cupid*, I yeeld, and they shall: but sweete *Cupid*, let them not bee deceiued by flatterie, which taketh the shape of affection, nor by lust, which is clothed in the habit of loue; for men haue as many slights to delude, as they haue words to speake.

Cup. Those that practise deceit, shall perish: *Cupid* fauoureth none but the faithfull.

Cer. Well, I will goe to *Erisicthon*, and bring him before thee.

Cup. Then shall thy Nymphes recouer their fames, so as they yeeld to loue.

Cer. They shall.

Exeunt.

ACTVS QVINTVS.

SCENA PRIMA.

Petulius, Protea.

Pet. A straunge discourse, *Protea*, by which I find the gods amorous, and Virgines immortall goddesses, full of crueltie, and men of vnhappinesse.

Prot. I haue told both my Fathers misfortunes, grown by stoutnesse, and mine by weakenesse, his thwarting of *Ceres*, my yeelding to *Neptune*.

Pet. I know, *Protea*, that hard yron falling into fire, waxeth soft, and then the tender heart of a Virgine being in loue, must needes melt: for what should a faire yong and wittie Ladie answere, to the sweete inticements of loue, but,

Molle meum leuibus cor est violabile telis.

Prot. I haue heard too, that hearts of men ſtiffer then ſteele, haue by loue beene made ſofter then wooll, and then they crie,

Omnia vincit amor, & nos cedamus amori.

Pet. Men haue often fained ſighs.

Prot. And women forged teares.

Pet. Suppoſe I loue not.

Prot. Suppoſe I care not.

Pet. If men ſweare and lie, howe will you trie their loues?

Prot. If women ſweare they loue, how will you trie their diſſembling?

Pet. The gods put wit into women.

Prot. And nature deceite into men.

Pet. I did this but to trie your patience.

Prot. Nor I, but to proue your faith. But ſee, *Petulus*, what miraculous puniſhments here are for deſerts in loue; this Rocke was a Nymph to *Ceres*, ſo was this Roſe, ſo that Bird.

Pet. All chaung'd from their ſhapes?

Prot. All chaung'd by *Cupid*, becauſe they diſdain'd loue, or diſſembl'd in it.

Pet. A faire warning to *Protea*; I hope ſhee will loue without diſſembling.

Prot. An Item for *Petulus*, that hee delude not thoſe that loue him; for *Cupid* can alſo chaunge men. Let vs in.

Exeunt.

FACTVS

ACTVS QVINTVS.

SCENA QVARTA.

Ramis, Siluestris, Montanus.

Ram. This goeth luckily, that *Cupid* hath promised to restore our mistresses, and *Ceres*, that they shall accept our loues.

Mont. I did euer imagine, that true loue would end with sweete ioyes, though it was begun with deepe sighs.

Sil. But how shall we looke on them when we shal see them smile? We must, and perchaunce they will frowne.

Ram. Tush, let vs indure the bending of their faire browes, and the scorching of their sparkling eyes, so that we may possesse at last the depth of their affections.

Mont. Possesse? Neuer doubt it, for *Ceres* hath restored *Erisicthon*, and therefore will perswade with them, nay, commaund them.

Sil. If it come by commaundement of *Ceres*, not their owne motions, I rather they should hate: for what ioye can there be in our liues, or in our loues sweetnesse, when euerie kisse shall bee sealed with a curse, and euerie kind word proceed of feare, not affection? enforcement is worse then enchantment.

Ram.

Ram. Art thou so superstitious in loue, that wast wont to be most careleſſe? Let them curſe all day, ſo I may haue but one kiſſe at night.

Mont. Thou art worſe then *Siluestris*, hee not content without abſolute loue, thou with indifferent.

Sil. But here commeth *Ceres* with *Eriſicthon*: let vs looke demurely, for in her heart ſhee hates vs deepely.

ACTVS QVINTVS.

SCENA VLTIMA.

Cupid, Ceres, Nymphes, Eriſicthon, Petulius, Protea.

Eriſict. I will hallow thy woods with ſolemne feaſtes, and honour all thy Nymphes with due regard.

Cer. Well, doe ſo, and thanke *Cupid* that commands, nay, thanke my fooliſh Nymphes, that know not how to obey; here be the louers ready at receipt: How now Gentlemen, what ſeeke you?

Ram. Nothing but what *Ceres* would find.

Cer. *Ceres* hath found thoſe, that I would ſhee had loſt, vaine louers.

Ram. *Ceres* may lose that, that *Cupid* would saue, true louers.

Cer. You thinke so one of another.

Sil. *Cupid* knoweth so of vs all.

Cer. You might haue made me a counsell of your loues.

Mont. I madame, if loue would admit counsell.

Cer. *Cupid*, here is *Erisicthon* in his former state, restore my Nimphs to theirs, then shal they embrace these louers, who wither out their youth.

Erisict. Honoured bee mightie *Cupid*, that makes me liue.

Pet. Honoured bee mightie *Cupid*, that makes me loue.

Prot. And me.

Cer. What, more louers yet? I thinke it bee impossible for *Ceres* to haue any follow her in one hower, that is not in loue in the next.

Cup. *Erisicthon*, bee thou carefull to honour *Ceres*, and forget not to please her Nymphs. The faithfull loue of thy daughter *Protea*, hath wrought both pittie in me to graunt her desires, and to release thy punishments. Thou *Petulius* shalt enioy thy loue, because I know thee loyall.

Pet. Then shall *Petulius* be most happie.

Prot. And *Protea* most fortunate.

Cup. But doe you, *Ramis*, continue your constant loue, and you, *Montanus*, and you, *Siluestris*.

Ram. Nothing can alter our affections which encrease, while the meanes decrease, and waxe stronger in being weakened.

Cup. Then, *Venus*, send downe that showre, wherewith thou wert wont to wash those that doe thee worship, and let loue by thy beames, bee honoured in all the world and feared, wished for, and wondred at: here are thy Nymphs, *Ceres*.

Ram. Whome doe I see? *Nysa*?

Mont.

Mont. Diuine *Celia*, fairer then euer shee was!

Sil. My sweete *Niobe*.

Cer. Why stare you, my Nymphs, as amazed? triumph rather because you haue your shapes: this great god *Cupid*, that for your prides and follies changed, hath by my praier and promise restored you.

Cup. You see, Ladies, what it is to make a mocke of loue, or a scorne of *Cupid*; see where your louers stand, you must now take them for your husbands; this is my iudgement, this is *Ceres* promise.

Ram. Happie *Ramis*.

Mont. Happie *Montanus*.

Sil. Happie *Siluestris*.

Cer. Why speake you not, Nymphes? This must bee done, and you must yeeld.

Nisa. Not I.

Niob. Nor I.

Cel. Nor I.

Cer. Not yeeld? Then shal *Cupid* in his furie turne you againe to sencelesse, and shamefull shapes.

Cup. Will you not yeeld? How say you *Ramis*? Doo your loues continue? Are your thoughts constant: & yours *Montanus*? And yours *Siluestris*?

Ram. Mine most vnspotted.

Mont. And mine.

Sil. And mine, *Cupid*, which nothing can alter.

Cup. And will you not yeeld, Virgins?

Nisa. Not I, *Cupid*, neither doe I thanke thee that I am restored to life, nor feare againe to be chaunged to stone: for rather had I beene worne with the continuall beating of waues, then dulled with the importunities of men, whose open flatteries make way to their secret lustes, retaining as little truth in their hearts, as modestie in their words; how happie was *Nisa*, which felt nothing, pined yet, not felt the consumption! vnfortunate wench, that now

haue eares to heare their cunning lies, and eyes to behold their dissembling lookes! turne me, *Cupid*, againe, for loue I will not.

Ram. Miserable *Ramis*, vnhappie to loue, to chaunge the Ladie, accurst, and now lose her, desperate!

Cel. Nor I *Cupid*: well could I content my selfe to bud in the Summer, and to die in the Winter: for more good commeth of the Rose, then can by loue: when it is fresh, it hath a sweete sauour, loue a sowre taste: the Rose when it is old, loseth not his vertue; loue when it is stale waxeth loathsome. The Rose distilled with fire yeeldeth sweete water: loue in extremities kindles iealousies: in the Rose how euer it be, there is sweetnes; in loue nothing but bitternesse. If men looke pale, and sweare, & sigh, then forsooth women must yeeld, because men say they loue, as though our hearts were tied to their tongues, and we must chuse them by appointment, our selues feeling no affection, and so haue our thoughtes bound prentises to their words: turne me againe. Yeeld I will not.

Mont. Which way shalt thou turne thy selfe, since nothing will turne her heart? Die, *Montanus*, with shame and griefe, and both infinite.

Niob. Nor I *Cupid*: let me hang alwayes in the ayre, which I found more constant then mens words: happie *Niobe*, that touched not the ground where they goe, but alwayes holding thy beake in the ayre, didst neuer turne backe to behold the earth. In the heauens I saw an orderly course, in the earth nothing but disorderly loue, and pleasantnesse: turne me againe, *Cupid*, for yeeld I will not.

Sil. I would my selfe were stone, flower, or fowle, seeing that *Nisa* hath a heart harder then stone, a face fairer then the Rose, and a mind lighter then feathers.

Cup. What haue we here? Hath punishment made you peruerse? *Ceres*, I vowe here by my sweete mother *Venus*, that if they yeeld not, I will turne them againe, not to

flowers,

flowers, or stones, or birds, but to monsters, no lesse filthie to be seene, then to bee named hatefull: they shall creepe that now stand, and be to all men odious, and bee to themselues (for the mind they shall retaine) loathsome.

Cer. My sweete Nymphs, for the honor of your sex, for the loue of *Ceres*, for regard of your own countrie, yeeld to loue, yeeld, my sweete Nymphes, to sweete loue.

Nisa. Shall I yeeld to him that practised my destruction, and when his loue was hoteſt, caused me to bee chaunged to a rocke?

Ram. *Nisa*, the extremitie of loue is madnesse, and to be mad is to bee senceleſſe, vpon that Rocke did I resolue to end my life: faire *Nisa*, forgiue him thy chaunge, that for himselfe prouided a harder chaunce.

Cel. Shall I yeeld to him, that made so small accompt of my beautie, that he studied how he might neuer behold it againe?

Mont. Faire Ladie, in the Rose did I alwayes behold thy colour, and resolu'd by continuall gazing to perish, which I could not doe when thou wast in thine owne shape, thou wast so coy and swift in flying from me.

Niob. Shall I yeeld to him that caused me haue wings, that I might flie farther from him.

Sil. Sweete *Niobe*, the farther you did seeme to bee from me, the neerer I was to my death, which to make it more speedy, wisht thee wings to flie into the ayre, and my selfe lead on my heeles to sinke into the Sea.

Cer. Well, my good Nymphes, yeeld, let *Ceres* intreat you yeeld.

Nisa. I am content, so as *Ramis*, when hee finds me cold in loue, or hard in beliefe, hee attribute it to his owne folly; in that I retaine some nature of the Rocke, he chaunged me into.

Ram. O my sweete *Nisa*, bee what thou wilt, and let

all thy imperfections bee excused by me, so thou but say thou louest me.

Nisa. I doe.

Ram. Happie *Ramis.*

Celia. I consent, so as *Montanus*, when in the midst of his sweete delight, shall find some bitter ouerthwarts, impute it to his folly, in that he suffered me to be a Rose, that hath prickles with her pleasantnes, as hee is like to haue with my loue shrewdnes.

Mont. Let me bleed euerie minute with the prickles of the Rose, so I may enioy but one hower the sauour: loue, faire *Celia*, and at thy pleasure comfort, and confound.

Celia. I doe.

Mont. Fortunate *Montanus.*

Niob. I yeeld od first in mind, though it bee my course last to speake: but if *Siluestris* find me not euer at home, let him curse himselfe that gaue me wings to flie abroad, whose feathers if his iealousie shall breake, my policie shall nip.

Non custodiri, ni velit vlla potest.

Sil. My sweete *Niobe*, flie whither thou wilt all day, so I may find thee in my nest at night, I will loue thee, and beloue thee.

Sit modo non fœci, dicere lingua memor.

Cup. I am glad you are all agreed, enioy your loues, and euerie one his delight. Thou *Erisicthon* art restored of *Ceres*, all the louers pleased by *Cupid*, shee ioyfull, I honoured. Now, Ladies, I will make such vnspotted loue among you, that there shall bee no suspition nor iarre, no vnkindnesse nor iealousie: but let all Ladies heereafter take heede, that they resist not loue, which worketh wonders.

Cer. I will charme my Nymphes, as they shall neither

be

be so stately, as not to stoope to loue, nor so light as presently to yeeld.

Cup. Here is none but is happie: but doe not as *Hippomanes* did, when by *Venus* ayd hee wonne *Atlanta*, defile her Temple with vnchast desires, and forgot to sacrifice vowes. I will soare vp into heauen, to settle the loues of the gods, that in earth haue dispos'd the affections of men.

Cer. I to my harueſt, whose corne is now come out of the blade, into the eare, and let all this amorous troupe to the temple of *Venus*, there to consummate what *Cupid* hath commaunded.

Erisict. I in the honour of *Cupid*, and *Ceres*, will solemnize this feast within my house, and learne, if it be not too late, againe to loue. But you Forresters were vnkind, that in all my maladies would not visit me.

Mont. Thou knowest, *Erisicthon*, that louers visit none but their mistresses.

Erisict. Well, I wil not take it vnkindly, since all ends in kindnesse.

Cer. Let it bee so; these louers mind nothing what we say.

Ram. Yes, we attend on *Ceres*.

Cer. Well, doe.

Exeunt.

FINIS.